

Week 1: Introduction to (and Review of) the Course

Topics: Evidence; False Positives; Guilt by Association; Social Construction of Statistics

The McCarthy Years (114 minutes)

Legendary journalist Edward R. Murrow is undoubtedly the first hero in the history of American broadcasting, a distinguished reporter who forever set the industry gold standard through his unparalleled courage, integrity and newsgathering excellence. From his electrifying WWII frontline coverage to his once-in-a-lifetime interviews with such prominent 20th century icons as John F. Kennedy, Louis Armstrong and Fidel Castro, Murrow truly understood the spellbinding beauty and power of the spoken word, and television would forever be indebted to his unique contributions.

Narrated by former CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite, **THE McCARTHY YEARS** turns back the clock to the Fifties, a time when the country lurched into a murky period of blacklists and witch-hunts for alleged Communists, all led by a young senator named Joseph McCarthy. Revered for his bravery and incorruptibility, Murrow made a controversial series of broadcasts that challenged McCarthy's abuses of power, which — as this gripping program investigates — signaled the emergence of television news as a momentous and highly influential force in American life.

When watching the footage of Joe McCarthy contained on this DVD it is hard to believe that this bumbling, uncharismatic and ill informed man was able to cause the misery he did in 1950's America. Ed Murrow had decided to oppose McCarthy by exposing the ridiculous excesses of McCarthyism, firstly by highlighting the plight of a man expelled from the armed forces because of the alleged links to Communism, and later by exposing the flaws in McCarthy's doctrine. "The McCarthy Years" contains all these programs in full as well as McCarthy's televised response to Murrow, which he exposed himself as a blustering idiot. McCarthy, despite having weeks to research, manages to hang himself with a string of factual inaccuracies, from not knowing Murrow's role at CBS to stating that Lenin's first name was Nikolai!. This is a DVD which anyone interested in the history of American politics and television should see.

Week 2: Probability Theory: Background and Bayes Theorem

Topics: Prosecutor's Fallacy; False Positives; Base Rates

Unfinished Business (58 minutes)

Steven Okazaki's Oscar-nominated 1984 film *Unfinished Business* was one of the first documentaries to confront the relocation of Japanese-Americans during World War II. As such it has an emotional immediacy that still rings clear today. Okazaki traces the story of Executive Order 9066, which decreed in the wake of Pearl Harbor that Japanese-American citizens living on the U.S. west coast should be uprooted and placed in relocation camps. In particular, we hear the histories of three men who separately defied the order and were arrested and jailed, each with his own particular story: Gordon Hirabayashi, Minoru Yasui, and Fred Korematsu. All three calmly describe their experiences, and Okazaki covers Korematsu's suit to have his conviction overturned. Newsreel footage, including footage from the camps, gives proof of the bleak relocation centers, and excerpts from government public-interest films (on relocation and the celebrated Japanese-American units of the U.S. military) give you-are-there looks at the era. These, and the forceful first-person testimonies of people involved, give weight to Korematsu's assertion that "it should never happen again to any American citizen just because he looks a little different from others."

Product Description:

In the spring of 1942, more than 110,000 American citizens of Japanese ancestry were uprooted from their homes and businesses and incarcerated in desolate relocation camps. Without hearings or trials, men, women and children were evacuated under Executive Order 9066--the Wartime Relocation Act. UNFINISHED BUSINESS is the story of three Japanese-American resisters--Gorden Hirabayashi, Fred Korematsu, and Minoru Yasui--who courageously defied the government order and refused to go, resulting in their conviction and imprisonment. The film interweaves their personal stories with moving archival footage of wartime anti-Japanese hysteria, the evacuation and incarceration, and life at the camps. It captures the men 40 years later, fighting to overturn their original convictions in the final round of the battle against the act which shattered the lives of two generations of Japanese-Americans. Produced and directed by Academy Award-winner Steven Okazaki (*Days of Waiting*), UNFINISHED BUSINESS is a gripping study of one of the most tragic--and significant--periods in American history.

The Infamous Dreyfus Affair (50 minutes)

On a cold Paris morning in January 1895, as 20,000 people shouted, “Death to the traitor, death to the Jew,” French Army Captain Alfred Dreyfus was publicly stripped of his rank for committing high treason. That the evidence against him was flimsy and fabricated did not matter; he was Jewish, and that alone was enough to sustain a gross miscarriage of justice that unraveled over a dozen years before his name was finally cleared. THE INFAMOUS DREYFUS CASE details the travesty which exposed the ignorance and prejudice of a nation. See how high-ranking officers set up Dreyfus to take the blame for a critical security leak, and how others who questioned his guilt were silenced and even court-martialed. Examine the evidence against Dreyfus, forged by an anti-Semitic colonel. And discover how an article by novelist Emile Zola brought the world's attention to the Army's actions, ultimately leading to Dreyfus's exoneration in the face of overwhelming evidence. It's an important portrait of hate, injustice and a man who bore the indignities thrust upon him with dignity and honor.

Week 3: Probability Theory: Application Areas

Topics: Base Rates; False Confessions; Evidence

The Central Park Five (2 hours)

We know going in that the five young men featured in The Central Park Five were ultimately exonerated of the crime for which they were imprisoned--indeed, the documentary begins with the real perpetrator's confession. But that's cold comfort to them, along with anyone else outraged by the miscarriage of justice detailed in this powerful film by Ken Burns, his daughter Sarah, and her husband, David McMahon. In April 1989, Trisha Meili, a 28-year-old investment banker, was raped and savagely beaten while jogging in the park. The shocking crime came in a city already known, as one interviewee describes it, as "the capital of racial violence," and media, politicians, cops, ordinary citizens, and everyone else demanded that whoever was responsible be brought to justice immediately, if not sooner. And although there were dozens of other black and Latino youths "wilding" (i.e., threatening and/or attacking others) in the park that night, only teenagers Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson, Yusef Salaam, Raymond Santana, and Korey Wise, all of whom were interviewed for this film, were ultimately arrested and convicted, based on confessions to the police who interrogated them. All five went to jail, serving between 6 and 13 years while the district attorney's office congratulated itself on a job well done. But the confessions, portions of

which we see in file footage, were bogus. If not actually coerced, they were certainly the products of five scared, confused, suggestible youths willing to say almost anything simply so they could go home. What's more, the confessions were the DA's only evidence; indeed, the DNA evidence didn't implicate any of the boys, and they were exonerated when a serial rapist named Matias Reyes confessed to the crime in 2002. So what went wrong? Aside from the Five and their family members, reporters, lawyers (excluding the prosecutors), and former New York mayors Ed Koch and David Dinkins point to a number of reasons: the "social moat" that divided the haves and have-nots, public pressure, sensational headlines in all the papers, cops more interested in making their "evidence" fit their theory of the crime instead of the other way around... and, inevitably, racism. In classic Burns style, the filmmakers combine interviews, film, photos, and some very effective music to create a document of shame that packs a genuine wallop.

Product Description:

This new film from award-winning filmmaker Ken Burns tells the story of the five black and Latino teenagers from Harlem who were wrongly convicted of raping a white woman in New York City's Central Park in 1989. The film chronicles the Central Park Jogger case, for the first time from the perspective of these five teenagers whose lives were upended by this miscarriage of justice.

Week 4: Correlation

Topics: Epidemiology; Graphical Presentation; Causation

Florence Nightingale (65 minutes)

Laura Fraser delivers a riveting performance as history's most famous "angel of mercy" who shuns her life of Victorian privilege to devote herself to relieving the misery of British soldiers during the Crimean War. Co-produced by the BBC, this captivating film uses Florence Nightingale's own correspondence to reveal a unique portrait of the young English woman who answered God's call and was transformed into Longfellow's "Lady with the Lamp" saving lives at the military hospital in Scutari. However, though Florence Nightingale was lauded throughout British society as a national hero, deep inside she was plagued by guilt. She believed more could have been done for the troops during the Crimean War and spent the rest of her life as a single-minded medical reformer at odds with military authorities. Meeting with Queen Victoria, forcing the formation of a Royal Commission, fighting until the last... A powerful and vivid portrayal of a pioneer

who revolutionized medicine.

Snow (22 minutes)

It is the summer of 1854 and a violent cholera outbreak has decimated the unseemly district of Soho, London. While the source of the outbreak remains unclear, the leading medical authorities blame the miasma, or poisonous air, which emanates from the filthy sewers and nearby bone boiling establishments. When an unlikely physician, Dr. John Snow, employs his newly developed disease mapping techniques, he uncovers an entirely different theory -- that the outbreak is stemming from a public water source known as the Broad Street Pump. After his impulsive attempts to shut down the pump are thwarted by unknowing residents, he desperately seeks the aid of his medical colleagues. Snow's outlandish theory is then ridiculed by the politically motivated and devout miasmist, Dr. Paris, who is charged by the Queen to put an end to the crisis. Snow realizes that he must face the Board of Governors alone, the only body that can authorize the closing of a local public utility. With the clock ticking and residents dying, he must piece together a scientific puzzle that will culminate in one historic moment, anointing Dr. John Snow as "Father of Modern Epidemiology."

Week 5: Prediction

Topics: Clinical Prediction Unreliability

The Thin Blue Line (102 minutes)

This landmark award-winning documentary, which revolutionized the form and helped acquit an innocent man of murder, came about almost by accident. Errol Morris had already directed such offbeat documentaries as *Gates of Heaven* (concerning pet cemeteries; a favorite of Roger Ebert's) and *Vernon, Florida*, which touchingly portrays the small town's eccentric inhabitants. He'd intended to travel to Texas to make a film about the criminal-psychiatry expert James Grigson, or "Dr. Death" as he came to be known for his frequent testimony against defendants, who were often then sent to death row. When Morris discovered that the doctor was involved in the trial of Randall Dale Adams, a man who, it seemed, had been falsely accused of the highway murder of a police officer, he decided that Adams's story was the real one to tell. Morris's innovative use of repeated dramatization, multiple points of view, talking-head and phone interviews, and symbolism--in concert with Philip Glass's haunting music--establishes that a combination of communitarian zeal and overly eager testimony persuaded the jury

to find Adams, a "drifter" from the Midwest, guilty of the crime, instead of his underage (and, for the death penalty, ineligible) acquaintance, David Harris, who had a criminal record. The "thin blue line" of police officers separating the public from chaos--as the judge, quoting the D.A. in the case, has it--destabilizes in Morris's world and puts people at risk of injustice as often as it protects them. After serving time for a sentence commuted to life imprisonment, Adams was freed, making Errol Morris his most talented advocate.

Product Description:

Academy Award winner Errol Morris broke new ground with the "riveting" (LA Weekly) film that dramatically reenacts the crime scene and investigation of a police officer's murder in Dallas. So powerful and convincing that it helped free an innocent man from prison, *The Thin Blue Line* is "one of the finest documentary features ever made" (Boxoffice). On November 28, 1976, when drifter Randall Dale Adams was picked up by teenage runaway David Harris, his fate was sealed. That night, a police officer was shot in cold blood. And though all the facts pointed to Harris, a sociopath with a lengthy rap sheet, Adams was convicted of capital murder. Was Adams guilty? And if not, can Morris unlock the secrets of this baffling case?

This is an extraordinary documentary in which film maker Errol Morris shows how an innocent man was convicted of murdering a policeman while the real murderer was let off scot free by the incompetent criminal justice system of Dallas, Texas. The amazing thing is that Morris demonstrates this gross miscarriage of justice in an utterly convincing manner simply by interviewing the participants. True, he reenacts the crime scene and flashes headlines from the newspaper stories to guide us, but it is simply the spoken words of the real murderer, especially in the cold-blooded, explosive audio tape that ends the film, that demonstrate not only his guilt but his psychopathic personality. And it is the spoken words of the defense attorneys, the rather substantial Edith James and the withdrawing Dennis White, and the wrongfully convicted Randall Adams that demonstrate the corrupt and incompetent methods used by the Dallas County justice system to bring about this false conviction. Particularly chilling were the words of Judge Don Metcalfe, waxing teary-eyed, as he recalls listening to the prosecutor's summation about how society is made safe by that "thin blue line" of cops who give their lives to protect us from criminals. The chilling part is that while he is indulging his emotions he is allowing the cop killer to go free and helping to convict an innocent man. Almost as chilling in its revelation of just how perverted and corrupt the system has

become, was the report of how a paid psychologist, as a means of justifying the death penalty, “interviewed” innocent Randall Adams for fifteen minutes and found him to be a danger to society, a blood-thirsty killer who would kill again.

This film will get your dander up. How the cops were so blind as to not see that 16-year-old David Harris was a dangerous, remorseless psychopath from the very beginning is beyond belief. He even took a delight in bragging about his crime. As Morris suggests, it was their desire to revenge the cop killing with the death penalty that blinded them to the obvious. They would rather fry an innocent man than convict the real murderer, who because of his age was not subject to the death penalty under Texas law. When an innocent man is wrongly convicted of a murder three things happen that are disastrous: One, an innocent man is in jail or even executed. Two, the real guilty party is free to kill again. And, three, the justice system is perverted. This last consequence is perhaps the worst. When people see their police, their courts, their judges condemning the innocent and letting the guilty walk free, they lose faith in the system and they begin to identify with those outside the system. They no longer trust the cops or the courts. The people become estranged from the system and the system becomes estranged from the people. This is the beginning of the breakdown of society. The Dallas cops and prosecutors and the stupid judge (David Metcalfe), who should have seen through the travesty, are to be blamed for the fact that David Harris, after he testified for the prosecution and was set free, did indeed kill again, as well as commit a number of other crimes of violence.

The beautiful thing about this film is, over and above the brilliance of its artistic construction, is that its message was so clear and so powerful that it led to the freeing of the innocent Randall Adams. Although the psychopathic David Harris, to my knowledge, was never tried for the crime he committed, he is in prison for other crimes and, it is hoped, will be there for the rest of his life. Errol Morris and the other people who made this fine film can take pride in these facts and in knowing that they did a job that the Dallas criminal justice system was unable to do.

Week 6: The Basic Sampling Model and Associated Topics

Topics: Unintended Consequences

The Plow that Broke the Plains (27 minutes)

The River (31 minutes)

George Stoney Commentary (21 minutes)

Art and propaganda meet to powerful effect in these two documentaries from the 1930s. Written and directed by Pare Lorentz, both *The Plow That Broke the Plains* and *The River* were made (in black & white) by the U.S government and clearly intended to promote President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, a series of initiatives designed to help the country recover from the Great Depression. Yet that fact detracts not at all from their artistry, as the combination of Lorentz's visuals and words and composer Virgil Thomson's music (the voice-over narration and the scores for both films were "re-created" in 2005 for this release) is often quite genuinely transcendent. Released in 1936 and sponsored by the U.S. Resettlement Administration, *The Plow* focuses on the Great Plains, those millions of grassy acres sprawled between Texas and Canada—"a high, treeless continent," the narration tells us, "without rivers or streams, a country of high winds and sun, and of little rain"--and how, after settlers wiped out the Indians and buffalo who once inhabited the area, the great prosperity and progress that followed eventually left the land over-grazed and over-farmed, turning it into a parched, cracked Dust Bowl, its people impoverished and desperately in need of food, care, jobs, and another chance. *The River*, from the following year, details the remarkable growth of trade and travel along the Mississippi River, where the booming farming, lumber, iron, coal, and steel industries stripped the surrounding land of its soil and roots, leading to the weakening of the river's levees and disastrous flooding (shades of New Orleans 2005), with government agencies like the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Farm Security Administration offering the best chance to escape this ruinous cycle.

The films are filled with striking images and poetry, but in the end, it's Thomson's music that makes the greatest impression; truly cinematic in scope, it draws on well known tunes ("There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight"), hymns ("The Doxology") and the composer's own brilliance to create a thoroughly American sound whose moods perfectly match and enhance what we see on the screen.

Product Description:

Pare Lorentz's *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936) and *The River* (1937) are landmark American documentary films. Aesthetically, they break new ground in seamlessly marrying pictorial imagery, symphonic music, and poetic free verse, all realized with supreme artistry. Ideologically, they indelibly encapsulate the strivings of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal". Virgil Thomson's scores for both films are among the most famous ever composed for the movies. Aaron Copland praised the music of *The Plow* for its "frankness and openness of feeling",

calling it “fresher, more simple, and more personal” than the Hollywood norm. He called the music for *The River* “a lesson in how to treat Americana”. Special Features include: George Stoney on *The Plow and The River* ; Stoney on *The New Deal, The River, and Race*.

Week 7: Psychometrics

Topics: The Darker Side (and Use) of Psychometrics

The Loving Story (77 minutes)

...a perfect time capsule that illuminates the racist past of our country with a uniquely personal and poignant emphasis --Hollywood Reporter

If a documentary can inspire us to look past the politics and punditry to recognize the humanity of the people our laws demonize, then it has certainly done the nation a service. --Mother Jones

Its not just a story of a forbidden marriage, but of quiet people who were underestimated by everyone. --Colin Firth

Product Description:

On June 2, 1958, a white man named Richard Loving and his part-black, part-Cherokee fiancée Mildred Jeter traveled from Caroline County, VA , to Washington, D.C., to be married. At the time, interracial marriage was illegal in 21 states, including Virginia. Back home two weeks later, the newlyweds were arrested, tried and convicted of the felony crime of “miscegenation.” Two young ACLU lawyers took on the Lovings’ case, fully aware of the challenges posed. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favor of the Lovings on June 12, 1967. This precedent-setting decision resulted in 16 states being ordered to overturn their bans on interracial marriage.

Nazi Medicine (54 minutes)

This special two film DVD features *NAZI MEDICINE: IN THE SHADOW OF THE REICH* and *THE CROSS AND THE STAR*, two riveting documentaries by John Michalczyk that confront the horrors of Hitler's Third Reich.

NAZI MEDICINE is considered “a work of truth and timeliness” (Allan A. Ryan,

U.S. Department of Justice) that studies the step-by-step process that led the German medical profession down an unethical road to genocide. It graphically documents the racial theories and eugenics principles that set the stage for the doctors' participation in sterilization and euthanasia, the selections at the death camps, as well as inhuman and unethical human experimentation. It is "a chilling chronicle of the road traveled by the Nazi physicians from providing a medical justification for the 1933 Nuremberg sterilization laws to trying to justify their role in the holocaust as defendants in the 1946-7 Nuremberg Doctor's Trial." (George Annas, co-editor, "The Nazi Doctors and the Nuremberg Code"). It also "obliges us to see how our tragic American history in eugenics theory helped to prepare the way for Nazi racial laws, especially sterilization legislation." (Robert F. Drinan, Professor, Georgetown University Law Center)

Having complained about history programs, I do have to say that "Nazi Medicine" is an immensely intriguing introduction into a topic little discussed in the broader context of the Nuremberg trials. Created by Professor John Michalcyzk of Boston College's Department of Film Studies, "Nazi Medicine" focuses a spotlight on the Nazi doctor's trial of 1946. Most of us know about the first Nuremberg trial where Herman Goering, Julius Streicher, and others faced an international tribunal for war crimes, but the doctor's trial apparently fell through the cracks. Considering that these were the monsters responsible for the deaths of millions in research laboratories and concentration camps, it is surprising more hasn't been made of their activities. "Nazi Medicine" explores the historical antecedents that made the grotesque experimentations of the German physicians possible, looking back to the early days of the twentieth century and the intense interest in eugenics. According to the documentary, the United States led the charge in investigating the potential of realizing the dreams of Social Darwinism through hard science. The American variant of eugenics was inherently racist, but the results on this side of the pond rarely went beyond pen and paper.

Europeans were not so lucky. German doctors picked up on the foundations laid by American scientists and put into practice experimentations on the human body so sickening as to defy description. Physicians set up pressure chambers to test the effects of extreme pressure on the human body, or messed around with germ and viral injections. What the doctors hoped to achieve were answers that would help the German war effort. Instead, the results of these experiments were inconclusive or downright nonexistent. What intrigued me most about "Nazi Medicine" was not the laundry list of atrocities (most of which we have heard about countless times before) but how the doctors moved from practitioners and guardians of the public health to conscienceless monsters who made distinctions between "superior" and

“inferior” human beings. One of the modern scholars interviewed for the film does an excellent job of explaining how this irrational belief system took on a perverse logic. The doctors could experiment on certain human beings--Jews, but others as well including criminals and the mentally infirm--because they believed these people were either not human or inferior humans. After all, do we not use animals to better the human race? Is this logic sociopathic? Probably, but once the physicians made the distinction the door was wide open for all sorts of horrific projects. The trial ultimately led to a statement about medical ethics still recognized today.

Week 8: Background: Data Presentation and Interpretation

Topics: Nuclear Weapon Development

The Manhattan Project (42 minutes)

At 5:30 a.m., July 16, 1945, scientists and dignitaries awaited the detonation of the first atomic bomb in a desolate area of the New Mexico desert aptly known as Jornada del Muerto--Journey of Death. Dubbed the Manhattan Project, the top-secret undertaking was tackled with unprecedented speed and expense--almost \$30-billion in today's dollars. Los Alamos scientists and engineers relate their trials, triumphs, and dark doubts about building the ultimate weapon of war in the interest of peace.

The Town That Never Was (16 minutes)

This 16-minute film tells the story of the Manhattan Project and Los Alamos from 1942–1945.

The conflict that darkened Europe in the late 1930s at first cast no shadow here on the sunny Pajarito Plateau. But soon World War II shook the entire world. Los Alamos, once the site of a boys’ ranch school, became the focus of the secret project to develop a new weapon, one that derived its power from splitting the atom.

Week 9: (Mis)reporting of Data

Topics: Social Construction of Statistics; Clinical Misunderstanding (e.g., Brainwashing)

The Manchurian Candidate (127 minutes)

You will never find a more chillingly suspenseful, perversely funny, or viciously satirical political thriller than *The Manchurian Candidate*, based on the novel by Richard Condon (author of *Winter Kills*). The film, withheld from distribution by star Frank Sinatra for almost a quarter century after President Kennedy's assassination, has lost none of its potency over time. Former infantryman Bennet Marco (Sinatra) is haunted by nightmares about his platoon having been captured and brainwashed in Korea. The indecipherable dreams seem to center on Sergeant Raymond Shaw (Laurence Harvey), a decorated war hero but a cold fish of a man whose own mother (Angela Lansbury, in one of the all-time great dragon-lady roles) describes him as looking like his head is “always about to come to a point.” Mrs. Bates has nothing on Lansbury's character, the manipulative queen behind her second husband, Senator John Iselin (James Gregory), a notoriously McCarthy-esque demagogue.

Product Description:

Eerie, shocking, daring, thrilling and mesmerizing, *The Manchurian Candidate* will leave you breathless (People)! Featuring an all-star cast, including Angela Lansbury in an Oscar-nominated performance, this chilling and controversial (Leonard Maltin) film may be the most sophisticated political satire ever made (Pauline Kael). When a platoon of Korean War G.I.s is captured, they somehow end up at a ladies garden club party. Or do they? Major Bennett Marco (Frank Sinatra) can't remember. As he searches for the answer, he discovers threads of a diabolical plot orchestrated by the utterly ruthless Mrs. Iselin (Lansbury) and involving her war hero son (Laurence Harvey), her senator husband (James Gregory) and a secret cabal of enemy leaders.

Week 10: Inferring Causality

Topics: Causality and Cigarette Smoking

Smoking and Cigarette Film Collection (102 minutes)

**Dangers of Cigarettes and Cigarette Smoking, Nicotine,
Cigarette Commercials, Smoking Related Cancer,
Tobacco Industry Advertising and More**

This DVD explores smoking in the mid 20th century through a variety of films discussing the health risks of smoking counterbalanced by a variety of commercials promoting smoking to the TV viewing audience.

The films in this collection include:

- A collection of 12 cigarette commercials for Lucky Strike, Montclair and Newport brand cigarettes;
- Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobacco (1950) - This is a nine minute musical short illustrating how Lucky Strike chooses and processes tobacco for fine cigarettes. The short features Frank Sinatra, Kay Kaiser and many other famous talents of the day;
- Up In Smoke (1960) - An examination of how tobacco company executives put profit over people's health. It shows the steps taken to develop brand loyalty and lifetime customers;
- Tobacco and the Human Body (1954) - This is an early exploration of the effects of tobacco on the human body. It demonstrates through a variety of lab experiments the exact effects of tobacco products; Time Pulls the Trigger - A strong anti-smoking film spelling out the dangerous effects of smoking on the human body in stark detail;
- You Are the Switchman (ca. 1951) - An educational film discussing the warning signs of cancer. It demonstrates the link between smoking and cancer and shows the symptoms that are the early warning signs for health problems and cancer;
- The Sixth Sense (1949) - A film detailing the processes that are followed to guarantee the quality of tobacco products.

Week 11: Simpson's Paradox; Meta-Analysis

Topics: Interpretation of Evidence

Sacco and Vanzetti (82 minutes)

Product Description:

On the 80th anniversary of their execution, the new documentary SACCO AND VANZETTI brings to life the story of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two

Italian immigrant anarchists accused of a murder in 1920, and executed in Boston in 1927 after a notoriously prejudiced trial. It is the first major documentary film about this landmark story.

The ordeal of Sacco and Vanzetti came to symbolize the bigotry and intolerance directed at immigrants and dissenters in America. Millions of people in the U.S. and around the world protested on their behalf, and today, the story continues to have great resonance, as civil liberties and the rights of immigrants are again under attack.

Actors John Turturro and Tony Shalhoub read the powerful prison writings of Sacco and Vanzetti, and a chorus of passionate commentators also propel the narrative, including Howard Zinn, Arlo Guthrie, Studs Terkel, as well as several people with personal connections to the story.

The Sacco and Vanzetti story has attracted some extraordinary artists over the years, including Ben Shahn, Woody Guthrie, Dorothy Parker, Upton Sinclair, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Joan Baez, and Diego Rivera, among others. Artwork, music, poetry, and feature film clips about the case are interwoven with the narrative.

Week 12: Statistical Sleuthing and Explanation

Topics: Flawed Diagnostic Testing

A Cry in the Dark (121 minutes)

Julia Louis-Dreyfus's Elaine on Seinfeld once offered a non sequitur at a party just to relieve her own boredom: "The dingo ate your baby," she blurted in a bad Australian accent. It was a reference to this harrowing film by director Fred Schepisi, based on a true story. Meryl Streep and Sam Neill play a married couple on a camping trip whose baby disappears. Streep maintains that the baby was carried off by a dingo--a wild dog--but she winds up as the victim of a hard-hearted prosecutor and the target of a nationwide hate campaign, in part because she was a religious fundamentalist who seemed unsympathetic and, thus, became an easy target for the tabloid press. Streep and Neill are both outstanding in this fierce, realistic drama about the ways faith can bolster even in the face of outrageous persecution.

Product Description:

An Australian woman stands trial for the murder of her child, which she claims was stolen by a dingo. Based on a true story.

Week 13: Background: Experimental Design and the Collection of Data

Topics: Statistics Usage As an Agent of Evil

The Fog of War (107 minutes)

The Fog of War, the movie that finally won Errol Morris the best documentary Oscar, is a spellbinder. Morris interviews Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, and finds a uniquely unsettling viewpoint on much of 20th-century American history. Employing a ton of archival material, including LBJ's fascinating taped conversations from the Oval Office, Morris probes the reasons behind the U.S. commitment to the Vietnam War--and finds a depressingly inconsistent policy. McNamara himself emerges as--well, not exactly apologetic, but clearly haunted by the what-ifs of Vietnam. He also mulls the bombing of Japan in World War II and the Cuban Missile Crisis, raising more questions than he answers. The Fog of War has the usual inexorable Morris momentum, aided by an uneasy Philip Glass score. This movie provides a glimpse inside government. It also encourages skepticism about same.

This brilliant work by director Morris is the stuff of life. And death. It arouses the most basic moral and immoral questions of being human through an enormously complex and yet simple man, Robert Strange McNamara. It seems no coincidence, his middle name, as we get to know him in all his cleverness and contradictions. Morris subtly illuminates, literally through McNamara's eyes, what it means to have power over life and death. Like God. There is something almost spiritual in McNamara's eyes, edited against searing images of, well, graphs, statistics, memoranda, bursting firebombs and nuclear mushrooms, almost all rarely seen-before footage. The eyes are the soul of this film—McNamara's are a combination of supreme confidence and extreme doubt. But not only his eyes - for example, we see President Kennedy's eyes frozen in the lens as he tells the nation of imminent nuclear war in 1962, a look that would make a Marine shiver. This new interview technique ("interrotron") draws us into what? War? Peace? Honor? Life? Power? Evil?

Born 85 years ago, McNamara is the quintessential man of his time, what Brokaw called the greatest generation, a sobriquet this documentary underscores. In McNamara's words he deplored the sorrow and pity of the four great wars of his

lifetime; the trenches in France; the nuclear and indiscriminate firebombing of innocent Japanese; the debacle in Korea; the flaming jungles of Vietnam. His command of statistics is breathtaking. But it is the eyes that reveal an inner truth, the precise opposite of his concise, rational words--his 11 "lessons". We see a man who never found himself in harm's way. We see eyes so ironically blinded by a circa 1918 vision of duty and honor that, though he loathed the horrors of Vietnam, he was compelled to allow his true judgment to go unexpressed until nearly 60,000 Americans were dead. He was at once perhaps the most powerful man in the world and its most despicable. It is easy to see why a brilliant young President Kennedy would choose someone as Defense Secretary who seemed so like himself, but tragically without the courage. And why, with Kennedy's death, McNamara by sheer ambition and brilliance would ascend to the very pinnacle of power.

Yet, I couldn't hate this guy. Perhaps the most telling moment is McNamara's clear devastation at Kennedy's assassination 41 years ago, again told in his eyes and a rare, emotional choking voice. So it's difficult to blame him for all those deaths he might have prevented -- McNamara genuinely believed he was doing the right thing for his Presidents: through an obsessive sense of duty and loyalty. Now that his day of legacy approaches, he expresses criticism over the actions of others -- General LeMay and President Johnson are the favored targets. But McNamara cannot quite bring himself to admit his own mistakes of enormous proportions. Yet it's quite clear that he was one of only two men who could have ended the 7-year slaughter (of his term in office). Many may find that failure a reason to despise the man. I found it just human.

This film offers up no easy answers (certainly not his 11 "lessons"), but more importantly raises many fundamental questions. Philip Glass' elegiac, edgy scoring perfectly meshes with this thriller. An impressive and important contribution to understanding our nation's ambivalent past

Yet McNamara's great strength had a dark side, which was exposed when the American involvement in Vietnam escalated. The single-minded emphasis on rational analysis based on quantifiable data led to grave errors. The problem was, data that were hard to quantify tended to be overlooked, and there was no way to measure intangibles like motivation, hope,

resentment, or courage. Much later, McNamara understood the error: “Uncertain how to evaluate results in a war without battle lines, the military tried to gauge its progress with quantitative measurements,” he wrote in his 1995 memoir, *In Retrospect*. “We failed then—as we have since—to recognize the limitations of modern, high-technology military equipment, forces, and doctrines in confronting highly unconventional, highly motivated people’s movements.”

Equally serious was a failure to insist that data be impartial. Much of the data about Vietnam were flawed from the start. This was no factory floor of an automobile plant, where inventory was housed under a single roof and could be counted with precision. The Pentagon depended on sources whose information could not be verified and was in fact biased. Many officers in the South Vietnamese army reported what they thought the Americans wanted to hear, and the Americans in turn engaged in wishful thinking, providing analyses that were overly optimistic. At first, being likened to a computer was meant as a compliment; later, it became a criticism. In the wake of Vietnam, McNamara was derided for his coldness and scorned as one of the so-called best and brightest who had led the country into a quagmire through arrogance.

Week 14: Ethical Considerations in Data Collection

Topics: Human Experimentation

Miss Evers’ Boys (118 minutes)

Laurence Fishburne helped shepherd this Emmy Award-winning exposé from American medical history books to the small screen. Anchored in the 1973 Senate inquiry into the infamous Tuskegee Study, the film uses a flashback structure to take us back 40 years as Nurse Eunice Evers (played with honest conviction by

Alfre Woodard, who also earned an acting Emmy for her powerful performance) describes how a program designed to treat syphilis among blacks in the South was twisted into an inhuman study. Evers's conscience is torn between leaving her position on principle or remaining to give the dying men what comfort she can while they are systematically refused life-saving medicine at every turn. Fishburne costars as Caleb, an easygoing but ambitious young fieldhand who discovers the cold reality of the study while courting Miss Evers. Adapted by Walter Bernstein from a play by David Feldshuh, the film rises above the TV Movie of the Week mold with a complex moral structure that eschews (if you'll pardon the expression) black and white polarities for shades of gray as the doctors' initial compromises become a lifetime of lies. Ultimately that tone becomes the most disturbing facet of the drama: doctors and nurses so enmeshed in what is tantamount to a conspiracy they can find no way out, and a government that searches for scapegoats for its own cold-blooded research.

Product Description:

Based on the shocking true story, *Miss Evers' Boys* exposes a 40-year government backed medical research effort on humans which led to tragic consequences. It is 1932 when loyal, devoted Nurse Eunice Evers (Alfre Woodard) is invited to work with Dr. Brodus (Joe Morton) and Dr. Douglas (Craig Sheffer) on a federally funded program to treat syphilis patients in Alabama. Free treatment is offered to those who test positive for the disease included Caleb Humphries (Laurence Fishburne) and Willie Johnson (Obba Babatunde). But when the government withdraws its funding, money is offered for what will become known as "The Tuskegee Experiment", a study of the effects of syphilis on patients who don't receive treatment. Now the men must be led to believe they are being cared for, when in fact they are being denied the medicine that could cure them. Miss Evers is faced with a terrible dilemma-to abandon the experiment and tell her patients, or to remain silent and offer only comfort. IT is a life or death decision that will dictate the course of not only her life, but the lives of all of Miss Evers' Boys.

Week 15: The Federal Rules of Evidence; Some Concluding Remarks

Topics: Evidence

West of Memphis (2 hours)

You'd think that after the exhaustive *Paradise Lost* trilogy of documentaries by Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky (in 1996, 2000, and 2011) about the so-called West

Memphis Three child murders that the subject would be pretty well accounted for. That is certainly true, but *West of Memphis* is in no way superfluous or redundant in its passionate examination of what is nearly impossible not to call a grave miscarriage of justice. For anyone who has seen the *Paradise Lost* films, the details of the case against Damien Echols, Jason Baldwin, and Jessie Misskelley are well known. Ever since their trial, conviction, and life sentences (with a death sentence for Echols) as teenagers for allegedly murdering three young boys in West Memphis, Arkansas, in 1993, the men have been regarded as scapegoats by thousands of people around the world as well as those intimately involved in the case. Though the state of Arkansas never budged on its obstinate stance, the three were released in a plea deal after 17 years when pushes for a possible new trial pointed to further rancor and the probability of new evidence that would expose a massive web of injustice. Director Amy Berg interviews many of the same characters that Sinofsky and Berlinger did, but her perspective is focused on efforts to free the men with a plethora of allegations infinitely more believable than that which the state used to ramrod them into guilt. Her star witness in this film is Lorri Davis, the woman Echols befriended by mail, then married in prison in 1999. Her efforts on the outside led to the ongoing campaign to free the West Memphis Three as well as to new investigations into who actually committed the crime. (Berg and Echols are coproducers, along with Peter Jackson and Fran Walsh of *Lord of the Rings* fame, who were massive financial and moral supporters of the cause since its beginning.) There is, of course, some duplication of material and it feels a little long, but *West of Memphis* is scrupulously crafted in both its visual style as well as its attention to the minutiae of facts--forensic and otherwise--that overwhelmingly point the finger of guilt at the stepfather of one of the victims. Digging deep, adding moral and emotional weight, and doling out information gradually to truly damning effect, *West of Memphis* is completely absorbing and extraordinarily moving. It also seems to be not nearly the end of the story in asking so many questions about whether genuine justice will ever be served.

Other Films of Interest:

The Atomic Cafe (88 minutes)

The atomic bomb changed the world forever, and this wonderful film shows how Americans expressed wonder over atomic weapons and then suffered from the pervasive fear that America would be on the receiving end of a Soviet nuclear attack. *Atomic Cafe* is a brilliant compilation of archival film clips beginning with the first atomic bomb detonation in the New Mexico desert. The footage, much of it produced as government propaganda, follows the story of the bomb through the two atomic attacks on Japan that ended World War II to the bomb's central role in the cold war. Shown along with the famous "duck and cover" Civil Defense films are lesser-known clips, many of which possess a bizarre black humor when seen today, and it's easy to see why this film, which was produced in the early 1980s, became a cult classic sometimes referred to as the "nuclear *Reefer Madness*." Bellicose congressmen are shown advocating a freewheeling policy of nuclear strikes against China during the Korean War, suburban families are shown enjoying the comforts of their bomb shelters, and footage of a boy trying to bicycle to a bomb shelter in a "bomb survival suit" his father designed is priceless. *Atomic Cafe* is at once clever and poignant, a canny and offbeat look at a significant period in American history.

Salem Witch Trials (50 minutes)

For the incoming Puritan settlers 17th-century New England was a place filled with fear and uncertainty. It was an environment that--coupled with a backdrop of religious extremism--bred an anxiety so intense it ultimately turned deadly. As a result of the 1692 Salem witch trials 19 men and women were hanged and one man was "pressed" to death following the untenable accusations made by several young girls from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. When the hysteria finally subsided and new community leaders came into power apologies were made and in 1711 legislation was passed that offered some financial restitution to the families of the victims. This program brought to you by THE HISTORY CHANNEL provides a comprehensive account of the actual events and examines the possible causes behind this highly notorious and puzzlingly complex period in early American history.

The Crucible (123 minutes)

The Salem witch hunts are given a new and nasty perspective when a vengeful teenage girl uses superstition and repression to her advantage, creating a killing machine that becomes a force unto itself. Pulsating with seductive energy, this provocative drama is as visually arresting as it is intellectually engrossing. Arthur Miller based his classic 1953 play on the actual Salem witch trials of 1692, creating what has since become a durable fixture of school drama courses. It may look like a historical drama, but Miller also meant the work as a parable for the misery created by the McCarthy anti-Communist hearings of the 1950s. This searing version of his drama delves into matters of conscience with concise accuracy and emotional honesty. Three passionate cheers for Miller, director Nicholas Hytner, and costars Daniel Day-Lewis and Winona Ryder.

The Salem witch trials of 1692 are brought vividly to life in this compelling adaptation of Arthur Miller's play, directed by Nicholas Hytner ("The Madness of King George"). A group of teenage girls meet in the woods at midnight for a secret love-conjuring ceremony. While the other girls attempt to cast love spells, Abigail Williams (Winona Ryder) wishes for the death of her former lover's (Daniel Day-Lewis) wife. When their ceremony is witnessed by the town minister, the girls suddenly find themselves accused of witchcraft. Soon the entire village is consumed by cries of witchcraft, and as the hysteria grows, blameless victims are torn from their homes, leading to a devastating climax.

A Paralyzing Fear (90 minutes)

By using a superb selection of period footage and blending it with present-day interviews, 'A Paralyzing Fear' captures much more than a history of a plague-like medical emergency, it captures an entire era in US history. --Cinemaniam Online

Like detectives, we follow the trail of the victims, test theories, and follow the case to a successful conclusion. --Wall Street Journal

A Tour de Force! Remarkable and comprehensive. --Hollywood Reporter

Seldom has society come full circle in the cycle of a disease-- from illness, to epidemic, to cure. Polio is the 20th century's most notable exception.

First appearing in the United States in 1916, the disease crippled tens of thousands of children every summer until it was finally eradicated by the Salk vaccine beginning in 1954. Every baby boomer remembers the terror of the polio epidemic and the thrill when the vaccine was discovered.

A PARALYZING FEAR is not only about the disease itself, but also about the effects it had on society as the epidemic struck and people began to fear and shun each other. Polio was blamed on immigrants, called a curse from God, and even thought of as the result of choosing the wrong types of friends. The film also portrays how the same society converged to meet the challenge of this epidemic and triumph over it. It brings to life an America that was both brave and innocent--when one of the greatest private fundraising campaigns of all times led millions of youngsters to collect dimes, to support scientific research, and a President became the poster child for acceptance of a disease.

The Grapes of Wrath (129 minutes)

Ranking No. 21 on the American Film Institute's list of the 100 greatest American films, this 1940 classic is a bit dated in its noble sentimentality, but it remains a luminous example of Hollywood classicism from the peerless director of mythic Americana, John Ford. Adapted by Nunnally Johnson from John Steinbeck's classic novel, the film tells a simple story about Oklahoma farmers leaving the depression-era dustbowl for the promised land of California, but it's the story's emotional resonance and theme of human perseverance that makes the movie so richly and timelessly rewarding. It's all about the humble Joad family's cross-country trek to escape the economic devastation of their ruined farmland, beginning when Tom Joad (Henry Fonda) returns from a four-year prison term to discover that his family home is empty. He's reunited with his family just as they're setting out for the westbound journey, and thus begins an odyssey of saddening losses and strengthening hopes. As Ma Joad, Oscar-winner Jane Darwell is the embodiment of one of America's greatest social tragedies and the "Okie" spirit of

pressing forward against all odds (as she says, "because we're the people"). A documentary-styled production for which Ford and cinematographer Gregg Toland demanded painstaking authenticity, *The Grapes of Wrath* is much more than a classy, old-fashioned history lesson. With dialogue and scenes that rank among the most moving and memorable ever filmed, it's a classic among classics--simply put, one of the finest films ever made.

This remarkable film version of Steinbeck's novel was nominated for seven Academy Awards, including for Best Picture, Actor (Henry Fonda), Film Editing, Sound and Writing. John Ford won the Best Director Oscar and actress Jane Darwell won Best Actress for her portrayal of Ma Joad, the matriarch of the struggling migrant farmer family. Following a prison term he served for manslaughter, Tom Joad returns to find his family homestead overwhelmed by weather and the greed of the banking industry. With little work potential on the horizon of the Oklahoma dust bowls, the entire family packs up and heads for the promised land -- California. But the arduous trip and harsh living conditions they encounter offer little hope, and family unity proves as daunting a challenge as any other they face.

Time of Fear (60 minutes)

In World War II, more than 110,000 Japanese-Americans were forced into relocation camps across the US. This film traces the lives of the 16,000 people who were sent to two camps in southeast Arkansas, one of the most racially segregated places in America at that time. Through interviews with the internees and local citizens, the program explores how the influx of outsiders overwhelmed and exposed racial tensions within the southern communities.

The internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II resonates today in more ways than one. Having read and viewed other material on Japanese-American internment, I found this film's slightly different emphasis on Arkansas refreshing. Arkansas, like many States in the American South, rigidly enforced segregation policies designed to keep blacks and whites separate. The arrival of 12,000 Japanese in Southeast Arkansas during WWII threw into question not only conceptions of what it meant to be American but what it meant to be white or black.

Among the more memorable parts of this documentary was the tensions

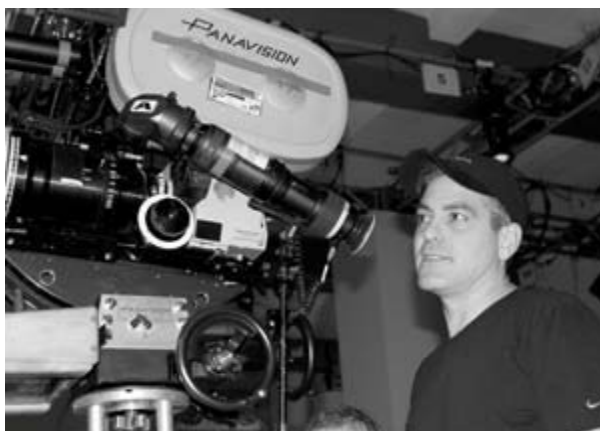
surrounding Mainland and Hawaiian Japanese Americans in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team ("Go For Broke"). When fighting over cultural differences threatens the integrity of the unit, a group of 442nd men (including U.S. Senator Dan Inouye) are sent to the Arkansas camps to witness the conditions (barracks, barb wire, and machine gun posts) that the mainland Japanese Americans enlisted under. It was the sight of fellow Japanese-Americans behind barb wire, more than anything, that really motivated the 442nd to overcome their differences and prove their American loyalty in battle.

Aside from the Arkansas experience and the Hawaii-Mainland Japanese differences, there's not a whole lot of new material covered here. "Time of Fear" is nonetheless memorable, if only because it throws a refreshingly different angle on the subject of Japanese American Internment.

I'd recommend this for any high school or college class studying Asian Americans, World War II, and/or Race in American History.

Good Night, and Good Luck (92 minutes)

Without force-feeding its timely message, *Good Night, and Good Luck* illuminates history to enlighten our present, when the need for a free and independent press is more important than ever. In 90 breathtaking minutes of efficient and intricate storytelling, writer-director George Clooney and cowriter Grant Heslov pay honorable tribute to the journalistic integrity of legendary CBS newscaster Edward R. Murrow,



Director George Clooney

who confronted the virulent and overzealous anti-Communist witch-hunting of Wisconsin Sen. Joseph McCarthy in 1953-54, and emerged as a triumphant truth-seeker against the abuses of corporate and governmental power.

As played by David Strathairn, Murrow is a dogged realist, keenly aware of the smear tactics that will be employed against him; Clooney provides crucial backup as Murrow's "See It Now" producer and closest confidante Fred Friendly, forming a fierce but not entirely fearless triumvirate of broadcasting bravery with CBS chief William Paley (Frank Langella), who anxiously champions Murrow's cause under constant threat of reprisals. While using crisp



David Strathairn as Edward R. Murrow

black-and-white cinematography (by Robert Elswit) to vividly recreate the electrifying atmosphere of the CBS newsroom and the early years of television, Clooney (son of long-time Cincinnati newsman Nick Clooney) proves his directorial skill by juggling big themes and an esteemed ensemble cast, never stooping to simplification of ethically complex material. *Good Night, and Good Luck* is an instant classic, destined for all the accolades it so richly deserves.

Triumph of the Will (122 minutes)

Triumph of the Will is one of the most important films ever made. Not because it documents evil--more watchable examples are being made today. And not as a historical example of blind propaganda--those (much shorter) movies are merely laughable now. No, Riefenstahl's masterpiece--and it is a masterpiece, politics aside--combines the strengths of documentary and propaganda into a single, overwhelmingly powerful visual force. Riefenstahl was hired by the Reich to create an eternal record of the 1934 rally at Nuremberg, and that's exactly what she does. You might not become a Nazi after watching her film, but you will understand too clearly how Germany fell under Hitler's spell. The early crowd scenes remind one of nothing so much as Beatles concert footage (if only their fans were so well behaved!). Like the fascists it monumentalizes, *Triumph of the Will* overlooks its own weaknesses--at nearly two hours, the speeches tend to drone on, and the repeated visual motifs are a little over-hypnotic, especially for modern

viewers. But the occasional iconic vista (banners lining the streets of Nuremberg, Hitler parting a sea of 200,000 party members standing at attention) will electrify anyone into wakefulness.

Leni Riefenstahl directed this chilling documentary of the sixth Nazi Party Congress in 1934. This intense digitally remastered presentation details how the Nazi party developed strong propaganda and attempted to sell their ideas to German leaders.

The Dust Bowl (4 hours)

Ken Burns gets to the heart of the matter once again with *The Dust Bowl*. Using his established formula of photos, film footage, music, and interviews (including some very affecting recollections by those who lived through it), the documentarian details one of the grimmest periods in our history--"an epic of human pain and suffering" that, though relatively recent, is little known to most, other than by way of some Woody Guthrie songs and perhaps John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. When Oklahoma earned its statehood in 1907, it was a land of clear skies, fertile land, and enough rain to enable farmers to grow amber waves of grain that stretched for millions of acres. But with lying real estate agents crowing about the land's inexhaustible sustainability, the government urging more and more homesteaders to relocate there, and pretty much everyone ignoring the fact that the last decade of the 19th century had seen terrible droughts throughout the region of the Panhandle and beyond, the land was plowed far beyond its capacity for planting (the first of the documentary's two parts is entitled "The Big Plow Up"). And when the Depression arrived and the rain disappeared, the result was the worst human-made environmental catastrophe in U.S. history, a decade-long disaster of genuinely biblical proportions that featured famine, pestilence (having killed off the coyote population, farmers were visited by a frightful plague of jackrabbits), disease, wind... and dust. For most of all, this is a story about dust--the "black blizzards" that blocked out the sun, carried away the topsoil, killed off livestock, seeped into people's homes, and found its way into their lungs, with deadly results. The photos and footage of the enormous, mile-high dust storms that blew across the plains--including the one that arrived on April 14, 1935, a day forever known as "Black Sunday"--are humbling and scary. At the same time, one gains a new appreciation for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who marshaled government

forces to help out, and especially the people themselves, some of whom headed west to California but many of whom stayed on to try to rebuild their lives. Kudos to Burns and his colleagues, including writer Dayton Duncan, for illuminating another quintessentially American story.

The Dust Bowl chronicles the worst man-made ecological disaster in American history, when a frenzied wheat boom on the southern Plains, followed by a decade-long drought during the 1930s, nearly swept away the breadbasket of the nation. Menacing black blizzards killed farmers' crops and livestock, threatened the lives of their children, and forced thousands of desperate families to pick up and move somewhere else. Vivid interviews with more than two dozen survivors of those hard times, combined with dramatic photographs and seldom seen movie footage, bring to life stories of incredible human suffering and equally incredible human perseverance.

The Dust Bowl, a four-hour, two-episode documentary from acclaimed filmmaker Ken Burns, is also a morality tale about our relationship to the land that sustains us—a lesson we ignore at our peril.

Minority Report (146 minutes)

Based on a Philip K. Dick short-story about a time in the future when criminals are arrested before they commit the crime. A future-viewing piece of technology gives police officers this privilege. One cop (Cruise) is caught committing a crime and now must find out why and how he broke the law in order to change time.

Wild River (110 minutes)

WILD RIVER may not have been a huge hit in its day, but given that it was directed by Elia Kazan, and had a noteworthy cast (with stars Montgomery Clift, Lee Remick and Jo Van Fleet all receiving critical acclaim if few award nominations), it would seem to be a prime candidate for a lavish US DVD release. Up until very recently, it hadn't received any release at all, which was very strange indeed. Here's a movie selected for preservation by the Library of Congress (2002) but no American edition has been available.

Well, now I see that for cinema buffs willing to make the investment, the film is now included in a fairly expensive box set, with the Martin Scorsese imprimatur and all. That's something--but it's something for fans a bit more well heeled than yours truly. (That and the fact, that I'd be shelling out primarily to get this film and *A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN*, which also has--unaccountably-- never been released individually.) And then there's this Korean package, that claims to be playable in all formats. Why, oh why can't I get excited about such things. Call it an innate suspicion. I can't vouch for the quality of product as product, but for those willing to take the plunge, I am more than willing to vouch for the quality of the film as a work of art.

I remember snoozing through the lessons in my high school history classes and barely skimming the textbook on the history of the Tennessee Valley Authority and the bringing of electricity to the rural South. I mean, it was then 1968 and electricity everywhere was a given, wasn't it? Who cared about such ancient history, why that was thirty some odd years before.

Well, now more than FORTY years on, I realize how important a good understanding of history really is--and how brief a time span thirty, forty or FIFTY years really is in the course of human affairs. And I've come to realize the power of intelligent dramatic and literary treatments of historical events. In '68, I was more interested in TV than the TVA, but now when I watch a film like *WILD RIVER* on my TV, I appreciate how a well made film, stressing the human element, makes that history come alive. It's just possible that had my 16 year old self been exposed to a screening of *WILD RIVER*, it just may have helped me connect with that particular chapter of US history in a very real way. (The fact that Lee Remick was a teenage crush of mine certainly would have helped).

WILD RIVER's storyline seems chock full of readymades (if not actual cliches): there's a feisty old widow whose refusal to sell her island home is holding up progress on the TVA's efforts to develop the Valley economically and to put an end to its cycle of endless flooding. There's also a somewhat heavy handed treatment of racial issues, with the enlightened Northerner (Clift) doing his bit to bring some justice for the community's black population--and endangering himself

and his new love (Remick) in the process. None of this is especially surprising or dramatically overwhelming. But it does provide a framework for some very honest scenes--mainly between Clift and Remick--in which conflicting emotions are expressed in refreshingly honest ways.

Getting at the truths of the human heart was director Elia Kazan's true forte. Yes, the history lesson is a valuable one, but what makes this film so compelling is the human story behind the story. The legitimacy of Kazan's reputation for being an actor's director was never better exemplified than in *WILD RIVER*. Only Jo Van Fleet is permitted to chew the (truly breathtaking) scenery--as would seem to be her (and her character's) right. Remick and Clift turn in more nuanced and tentative performances, in keeping with the tentativeness of their situation. No false notes are hit in their scenes together--or with other actors. A lesser film might have had Remick's jealous hometown beau (Frank Overton) engage in fisticuffs or worse with the newcomer, cityboy who succeeds in capturing his gal's heart. Instead an odd alliance is actually formed when the decent hometown boyfriend breaks down and warns his rival of plots against him by the racist local populace.

Lee Remick always cited her role *WILD RIVER* as the best of her career, which might surprise fans of *DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES* or *ANATOMY OF A MURDER*, but these days, I tend to agree with her assessment. Her character here Carol Garth Baldwin is more multi-dimensional than the alcoholic Kirsten Arnesen Clay of the former film or the wanton Laura Manion of the latter. Her scenes with Montgomery Clift have a ring of authenticity that is still quite rare in American film. You feel as though you're eavesdropping on real conversations, actual heart-to-hearts. And that's not easy to achieve. Kazan and Co. did it here and it's a downright shame that the movie is so hard to get a hold of in its native land.

Tomorrow's Children (52 minutes)

The movie revolves around the subject of Negative Eugenics. Negative Eugenics involves any method used to keep people considered racially, socially or biologically inferior from reproducing "their kind." Eugenacists believe it can better the human stock by weeding out the so called weak or undesirable traits thought to be genetically inherited. Backward thinking states used sterilization of

people it deemed mentally, socially or criminally defective or degenerate to weed such individuals out of the public gene pool. Ignorant people in backward states felt eliminating the so called feeble minded was in the state and public best interest. Eugenics is basically just another scientifically posh word for race, diversity and social hatred of the type made infamous by Nazi's under Adolf Hitler and his foul ilk.

This movie takes us into a family of the most backward loathesome criminals, mental defectives and moral degenerates you could imagine. The father is a lazy shiftless drunk who cares more about himself than anyone else. The mother is just a dim wit carried along life by sheer dumb luck, riding the crest of life in ignorant bliss as her own ignorance drags her to an early grave. One son is physically disabled and all but mindless. Another son has the IQ of a spent gum wrapper as he plays by making toys of his derelict drunk fathers many empty booze bottles. A good hearted but stupid doctor thinks he is doing this sick family a favor by getting them, "Welfare!" Unfortunately in this state Welfare comes with a terrible price to pay. You guessed it. The State gets to (Sterilize the whole family!) Sterilize as in render all the members of the afflicted family unable to have children.

What makes this movie so creepy is the ghoulish Nazi like ways doctors, social workers and cops work together to corner then destroy this poor weak family of mindless infantile dolts. The state treats the people it captures for Sterilization like dumb brutes hauling the poor dears off to a hospital like so many burdensome animals who must be "Fixed for their own good!" I find it odd that in the United States we actually had social workers, doctors and police running around backward states targeting and rounding up poor, ignorant people it labeled defective. The behavior of backward states sterilizing people against their will suggests that long before Adolf Hitler the United States was taking the first halting steps to its own "FINAL SOLUTION OF ITS FEEBLE MINDED AND DISABILITY PROBLEM!" The other scary part of this DVD for me is the fact that I have 13 disabilities. My sister has a few. However the main premise of the Tomorrow's Children DVD Video suggests that families of so called disabled "Genetically Inferior" offspring will be a sure fire automatic burden to the state hence making Sterilization the only way to control the menace posed by us.

However despite my 13 disabilities and autism I have never been arrested. I have never engaged in a lifetime of purely criminal conduct. I have no children of my own. I am not and have never been an alcoholic. I am not particularly violent. I am a black man. Both myself and my disabled sibling came from humble beginnings. Yet today we both enjoy good jobs. I have a very good job. I have a nice home. I pay my taxes and am NOT on welfare. Eugenically based on the negative sterilization eugenics message in this Tomorrow's Children movie I should be an utter failure, a burden to the state and worse. I am instead highly successful happy and I have contributed much to enhance the quality of life in our society.

In the final analysis this movie sidesteps the powerful message it could have sent by dealing directly with huge morality issues associated with state sponsored forced sterilization. The movie uses a trick of birth to suggest the person about to be butchered by the State Sterilization Nazi's was not actually biologically related to the family of imbeciles who raised her. However for the time of its release this little movie had guts taking on the Sterilization mindset growing in the United States where some 20 states had forced sterilization laws on the books that targeted the most poor, disabled folks. This movie reminds us just how close the United States came to walking down the same Eugenics hell hole that spawned the ignorant arrogant culture of hate that was the heart and soul of Nazi Germany. Eugenics is just another tool of hate its proponents want others to buy into. Unfortunately Eugenics is just the most perverse evil imaginable wrapped in its most finest well crafted and alluring packaging. This DVD proves what a wise lady once shared with me, that DRECK IS STILL GARBAGE NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO TO FRESHEN IT UP!

Why We Fight (7 films by Frank Capra)

At the start of World War II, the US War Department under General George Marshall asked one of Hollywood's most respected filmmakers to produce a series of seven films called *Why We Fight*. Frank Capra, Academy Award-winning director of *You Can't Take it With You*, *It Happened One Night* and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, would say to the general, I'll make the best darn documentary films ever made. See those seven films completely unaltered, along with two OSCAR-winning war films *December 7th* and *The True Glory*, in this 8-DVD collection. State-of-the-art technology was used to digitally remaster and create

pristine transfers from the original source materials in order to ensure this set contains the highest quality collection of war films available anywhere.

December 7th (104 minutes)

In 1943 John Ford gave the great cinematographer Gregg Toland (*Citizen Kane*, *The Grapes of Wrath*) an opportunity to direct his first film. What was intended to be a short documentary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor grew into a veritable epic, framed by a debate between Walter Huston's Uncle Sam and Harry Davenport's Mr. C on the true nature of the Pacific paradise. Hawaiian history, rah-rah patriotism, and arguments over the loyalty of the Japanese-American population are capped by a stunning re-creation of the battle so convincing that feature films borrowed footage from it for decades. Although dated, it's a fascinating slice of history that until a few years ago was never seen by the public. Toland's criticisms of the American Navy caused it to be withheld until Ford could cut the 82-minute feature into a half-hour short, removing the history and analysis and concentrating solely on the battle and the recovery.

VCI's release features Toland's original cut as well as Movietone News and Universal newsreels of the attack and an unusual Japanese TV newscast covering the 1995 debut of this restored version in Japan.

The DVD also features Ford's Oscar-winning 34-minute version, audio commentary by four Pearl Harbor survivors, and Frank Capra's 60-minute 1945 documentary *Know Your Enemy: Japan*, a more traditionally jingoistic piece of wartime propaganda that was narrated by Walter Huston.

John Ford's "DECEMBER 7th: THE PEARL HARBOR STORY," was banned by the U.S. Government for nearly fifty years. This special edition is now available; presenting the fully restored 84-minute version, with subtitles added to the controversial Japanese language sequences and a special "behind the scene" introduction. (A completely censored 34-minute version of the film was released and earned John Ford his fourth Academy Award.) This full-length version stars Walter Huston as Uncle Sam and is set in Honolulu on the day before the Japanese attack. Uncle Sam vacations complacently in Hawaii, concerned with the on-going war in Europe. On Sunday morning, December 7th, air squadrons appear, "swooping down like flights of tiny locust". The attack on Pearl Harbor, America's first battle of World War II, is vividly illustrated as only Hollywood can do.

Bonus Features: Universal Newsreel: Pearl Harbor first films| Movietone News Extra! - First actual battle films. Includes comments by Al Brick- the Movietone cameraman who filmed the footage| Japan's Reaction! - When this "uncensored" version was first shown in Japan in 1995 it was treated as a major news story. See the actual newscast| Commentary by 4 actual Pearl Harbor survivors| Compare the "cut" and "uncut" versions| Frank Capra's infamous "Know Your Enemy" (1945) 62-minute documentary

Paradise Lost Trilogy (3 films)

The landmark documentary that sparked an international movement to 'Free the West Memphis Three', PARADISE LOST investigates the gruesome 1993 murder of three eight-year-old boys and the three teenagers accused of killing them as part of a Satanic ritual. From real-life courtroom drama and clandestine jailhouse interviews to behind-the-scenes strategy meetings and intimate moments with grief-stricken families, acclaimed filmmakers Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky were granted unprecedented access to all the players involved, capturing the events as they unfolded. REVELATIONS delves deeply into the shocking aftermath of the trials, updating the story seven years after the murders. With Echols on death row and Baldwin and Misskelley serving life sentences, PURGATORY picks up the story and reexamines the horrifying crime with fresh insights that only the passage of time can provide. Facts are reexamined, new evidence is revealed and new suspects are scrutinized.

Together, these films tear the lid off a notorious murder case and create a portrait of the American justice system that is at turns terrifying, heartbreaking and mesmerizing, ultimately demonstrating the power of cinema to effect social change.

The plight of the infamous West Memphis Three has been the center of controversy for almost two decades now. Upon discovering three eight year old boys murdered and discarded in the Robin Hood Hills area of West Memphis, Arkansas in 1993, a subsequent investigation caused local police to target three teen outsiders for the crime. Based on the most specious of evidence and a rampant desire to see justice done for such a heinous act, Damien Echols, Jason Baldwin and Jessie Misskelley were convicted and sentenced in 1994 despite a clear lack of physical evidence or motive. Due to Echols appearance, interest in metal music, and fascination with disturbing imagery, the deaths were chalked up to being a part of a dark occult ritual. And a frightened and justifiable mob mentality ruled the day

(especially as word of Misskelley's questionable confession circulated).

But the facts never really added up and filmmakers Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky were on hand to document the proceedings in the disturbing feature (which won them an Emmy among other accolades) "Paradise Lost: The Child Murders of Robin Hood Hills" in 1996. As that film highlighted an apparent miscarriage of justice, it caused the West Memphis Three to become a national cause celebre. Graphic and unpleasant, it was a riveting film that brought an unrelenting awareness to the case and the legal system in general. In 2000, the pair released "Paradise Lost 2: Revelations" which was largely in response to the first film's reaction. It caught up with the boys in jail, and the focus seems to have been to dig further into the evidence and other possible suspects. It is more speculative in nature, but with all the doubt surrounding the original convictions--the question is asked why no further investigation has been pursued if justice were a primary concern.

Now "Paradise Lost 3: Purgatory" puts the concluding note on this tragedy of injustice. Ten years after the second film, this documentary covers all the efforts that have been made in the preceding decade to garner the boys a new trial. New experts, new witnesses, new evidence--and yet it was an incredibly lengthy and disheartening process to get anything past the Arkansas officials who stood by the original convictions. News of what happened in 2010 has been reported extensively in the media, but I still won't reveal the final resolutions depicted within the film. I will say that, once again, this is a stirring document about real world events. The film cuts between modern interviews, to scenes from the original film, to pertinent footage throughout the last ten years. Major players have shifted allegiance (including someone Echols had initially cast aspersions about), a viable new suspect emerges (his testimony is chilling as he is questioned about the murders in his lawsuit against Dixie Chick Natalie Maines for defamation), and the legal system continues to disappoint (even in the face of national scrutiny).

As a stand-alone film, "Purgatory" works fine. It recaps enough to keep anyone in the loop. But as the third part of a trio of films, it is astoundingly effective. To watch all three films is to experience filmmaking at its most powerful. We talk about film having the ability to transform lives, especially documentaries, but Berlinger and Sinofsky have proven it with the "Paradise Lost" series. Eighteen years in the telling, it is their first film that affected everything and led to the final outcomes. The films have become a part of the documentary. Echols even thanks them for putting the case into the spotlight and essentially saving his life from the lynch mob mentality that surrounded the initial arrest. It's strong and powerful

stuff, as well as disturbing, and this is a story will linger with you long after the film ends. While I easily recommend this movie, do yourself a favor and get all three to see where filmmaking crosses over into history making. Perhaps the biggest injustice, though, is that the politics and legal wrangling have overshadowed the tragic deaths that precipitated everything. So thankfully, the film wraps with a tribute to the murdered boys.

The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers (94 minutes)

In 1971, Daniel Ellsberg, a high-level Pentagon official and Vietnam War strategist, concludes that the war is based on decades of lies and leaks 7,000 pages of top secret documents to The New York Times, making headlines around the world. Hailed as a hero, vilified as a traitor, and ostracized by even his closest colleagues, Ellsberg risks life in prison to stop a war he helped plan. This is the riveting story of one man's profound crisis of conscience that shook a nation, its courts, its free press and its presidency to the core. It is also an acutely timely and piercing look at the world of government secrecy in wartime as revealed by the ultimate insider. Marked by a landmark Supreme Court battle between America's greatest newspapers and its president, this political thriller unravels a saga that leads directly to Watergate, Nixon's resignation and the end of the Vietnam War.

Dan Ellsberg, the reader probably knows, is the analyst who leaked the Pentagon Papers to the press during the early 1970s. The Vietnam war had been raging, and all of a sudden the mainstream press had access to secret documents that showed, first, that plans had been in place for invasion of Indochina from the time Truman was in office, and that from Truman on, presidents had been lying to us up to and including the alleged attack of two US ships on the Gulf of Tonkin in 1964 which caused the real explosion of that war.

What many people don't know about Dr. Ellsberg is that he was an officer in the Marine Corps before he went into the academic world, then became a Rand Corp. analyst.

The most interesting element of the film is the process of watching Ellsberg change. He even examined a little of what led him into the Marines, wondering, he thought, whether he could make it. He ended up being the only 1st lieutenant

overseeing 211 other Marines in a rifle company. While there, he still seemed to believe in "the system."

Early in the film, it seemed like it may go into a pscho-babble direction, i.e., diagnosing why he did what he did, But that wasn't, fortunately, taken too far. But while working for the system--being part of that system that perpetuated the war--his conscience began to bother him. He talked with others, notably Tony Russo, who encouraged him to follow his conscience.

The film went from a silhouetted "actor" portraying Ellsberg on the phone, or in discussions with others, to an occasional animation. But the animation wasn't frivolous. Some of it was, for example, of his kids and he xeroxing the top secret papers, the police coming to the door on an unrelated incident, and Ellsberg almost embarassingly describing how the police had no idea what was going on right under their noses.

Throughout the film, there were graphics of a reel-to-reel tape player accompanied by the "surtitles" of what President Nixon was saying, to Henry Kissinger, to Al Haig, and to others, the profanity for which Nixon was notorious, and how he was going to get Ellsberg, etc. etc.

Another interesting perspective of Ellsberg on the press's reaction to what his use of tangible figures to describe the war: he'd tell reporters how much bomb tonnage was dropped in Vietnam, and compared it to Hiroshima. (At the very beginning of the film, someone, I don't recall who, stated something about the most overbombed country in history or something to that effect; the amount of bombing we did over that little country was beyond anything that had been done before, even on developed countries!) But the press didn't seem to make note of those figures, something measurable by which to evaluate the damage we were inflicting on Vietnam despite how often Ellsberg cited them.

There may have been a little more adoration of Ellsberg than was appropriate. But my saying that is as much speculation, and I guess some of my own skepticism coming out. For instance, Ellsberg had been anxious to get the material published in the NY Times, and pressed them to release it. Then the FBI was on the prowl for him. But he wanted more and more elements of the press to get it. The film made it look like it was his strategy, or tenacity, that caused seventeen publications, including the Philadelphia Inquirer, the LA Times and others, to release more of the papers. My skepticism leads me to think there was as much chance to that many publications getting access to the information, but, again, perhaps I'm

speculating.

When the FBI finally caught up with Ellsberg and Russo, they were on trial for long terms, in Ellsberg's case, for up to 115 years. But during the trial, it turned out that the government had been bugging Ellsberg for years before the Pentagon Papers were even an issue. The government had bungled the case so badly that a mistrial was called, and Nixon responded with his usual comments.

What intrigued me most about the film is the connections that it made between the release of the Pentagon Papers, the Watergate incident, and the eventual downfall (resignation) of Nixon. At least according to the film, they were closely related with the Papers release having catalyzed the whole process.

Shelving my skepticism for now, until it's challenged, I'll buy that contention of the film. Again, it's not a connection I'd made before but it sure seems logical after seeing this film which should be shown to every class in high school or college dedicated to the study of the Vietnam conflict.

Salt of the Earth (94 minutes)

Included in the prestigious National Film Registry of the Library of Congress, *Salt of the Earth* represents a milestone in the history of American movies. It was produced, written, and directed by filmmakers who were still blacklisted when the film was made in 1953, during the anticommunist witch-hunts that plagued Hollywood (and the entire country) at the height of the McCarthy era. While the filmmakers faced misguided suspicion of promoting anti-American sentiments, the film was financed in part by the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, which strongly supported this powerful social-realist drama about a strike by Mexican American zinc miners in New Mexico. Featuring a prominent role for blacklisted actor Will Geer (later famous as Grandpa on TV's *The Waltons*), the story intensifies when the strikers are forced to stop picketing and their wives take up the cause. Focusing on one struggling couple to illustrate its themes of individual dignity and human rights, the film was released in only 13 theaters nationwide in 1954, receiving a majority of highly positive reviews. Still, *Salt of the Earth* was surrounded by controversy before, during, and after its production, and it was widely misinterpreted as a call for social revolution. It remained largely unseen in America until the 1960s, but this boldly independent film has since been duly recognized for its artistic and social importance.

It upsets me to see people write negative things about this movie. My grandmother and grandfather were involved in the making of this movie and appear in it along with my dad who was a child. Although I hated watching it as a child (I was forced to) I have learned to see past the not so great acting and cinematography to see the true spirit of the film. I am so proud of what they did to bring equality and safety to those workers who were discriminated against because of their race and their bravery. I am very proud of this movie as are my grandparents and entire family. I have no clue how anyone could view this as communist propoganda! I thought we had all learned our lessons from the Mc Carthy era. Perhaps I have a deeply personal stake in this movie but for me it represents everything that is American about America. Free speech, civil rights, gender equality. Strength and perseverance of the American people to stand up for what is right. I can tell you from personal knowlege that this movie is an entirely accurate account of a very important event in American history and is truly a treasure.

I Was a Communist for the FBI (82 minutes)

This is a review for I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE F.B.I. (1951) directed by Gordon Douglas. I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE F.B.I. is the story of Pittsburgh steel worker and union official Matt Cvetic, played by Frank Lovejoy, who joined the Communist Party U.S.A. as an undercover agent at the government's request. When his communist membership became well known Cvetic lost his friends and was shunned by his family, including his teen- aged son. Eventually he meets his son's high school teacher and becomes involved with her even though she, too, is a party member. Despite his actual political convictions Cvetic continues recruiting and otherwise working for the communist party until the day comes when he is slated to testify against the Pittsburgh party officials and after nine years underground he is allowed to reveal himself to everyone he knows.

The only place I have seen I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE F.B.I.called a film noir is a book titled "Death On The Cheap: The Lost B Movies Of Film Noir" by Arthur Lyons and even there it is just listed, not really discussed. However, I believe that a noir case can be made for this film by pointing out that the protagonist, Matt Cvetic, after nine years undercover is scorned by just about everyone he knows but still stays in Pittsburgh and takes all the hatred and sheer dislike and distrust apparently turning the other cheek most every time. Just because he has a greater purpose, to expose the party when, and only when, our government gives him the order. If that isn't a hellish existence, almost losing himself in the abyss of hatred and paranoia, and fighting himself to suppress his

true feelings just about every day, I don't know what is. So I would rate I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE F.B.I. as a film noir, although certainly not the kind of film we usually think of when noir is mentioned.

Over all I think I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE F.B.I. is a well-made, fast paced movie with believable performances by everyone on screen. Just as it was released, the undeclared Korean War heated up and it was an actual (sort of) wartime film, depicting our enemies as spies and saboteurs, which happened to be true. In any event, I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE F.B.I. is a window into the past of sixty years ago and unfortunately, we're facing some of the same situations these days as well.

The Day After Trinity (88 minutes)

The Day After Trinity is a haunting journey through the dawn of the nuclear age, an incisive history of humanity's most dubious achievement and the man behind it--J. Robert Oppenheimer, the principal architect of the atomic bomb. Featuring archival footage and commentary from scientists and soldiers directly involved with the Manhattan Project, this gripping film is a fascinating look at the scope and power of the Nuclear Age.

Jon Else's Oscar-nominated documentary is a gem. He tells the story of the creation of the first atomic bomb, through the story of the amazing man who was picked to head up the project. J. Robert Oppenheimer would be a renaissance man in any time, but his presence during WWII and the Cold War afterwards, and his own doomed role in these world history events, makes him a tragic hero. Intelligent beyond comprehension, literate, poetic, charming, and dedicated (both to science and humanity), the experience of WWII's horror diverted his life on a collision course with history. Else's film is poignant, touching, restrained, and ultimately moving. Made in 1979, he was fortunate to be able to interview many of "Oppie's" colleagues, friends, and his brother Frank (who started another, lesser-known revolution, in interactive "museums," with his Exploratorium in San Francisco; WGBH's Nova series did a show on it). They all give us insight into the man, the scientist, the devotee of poetry, as well as the time in which these erudite engineers and scientists came together to build the ultimate weapon. Also of note, at the time of release, THE DAY AFTER TRINITY featured recently discovered, previously unseen footage of the Trinity test.

If you have children, or friends, who have only passing knowledge of the Atomic Age, and the effect it had on history, you deserve to own a copy of this classic

film. It's instructive, but it is quietly passionate. You can't watch this and not be effected emotionally. That's the highest praise I can give a film. See this film...!

A Face in the Crowd (125 minutes)

More timely now, perhaps, than when it was first released in 1957, Elia Kazan's overheated political melodrama explores the dangerous manipulative power of pop culture. It exposes the underside of Capra-corn populism, as exemplified in the optimistic fable of grassroots punditry *Meet John Doe*. In Kazan's account, scripted by Budd Schulberg, the common-man pontificator (Andy Griffith) is no Gary Cooper-style aw-shucks paragon. Promoted to national fame as a folksy TV idol by radio producer Patricia Neal, Griffith's Larry "Lonesome" Rhodes turns out to be a megalomaniacal rat bastard. The film turns apocalyptic as Rhodes exploits his power to sway the masses, helping to elect a reactionary presidential candidate. The parodies of television commercials and opinion polling were cutting edge in their day (*Face in the Crowd* was the *Network* of the Eisenhower era), and there are some startling, near-documentary sequences shot on location in Arkansas. An extraordinary supporting cast (led by Walter Matthau and Lee Remick) helps keep the energy level high, even when the satire turns shrill and unpersuasive in the final reel. There's an interesting parallel in Tim Robbins's snide pseudodocumentary *Bob Roberts*: both these pictures have almost as much contempt for the lemmings in the audience as for the manipulative monsters who herd them over the cliff.

Andy Griffith, Patricia Neal, Walter Matthau. A cynical con artist is propelled to TV stardom by corporate executives who think he is an unassuming homeless man struggling with hard times. Features cameos by Burl Ives, Mike Wallace and many others. Directed by Elia Kazan.

Howard Zinn; You Can't be Neutral on a Moving Train (78 minutes)

In celebration of the life of Howard Zinn (1922 - 2010), First Run Features is releasing a commemorative edition of the 2004 film "Howard Zinn: You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train", complete with over an hour of extra bonus features and interviews.

New Bonus Materials Include: Bonus Speeches and Interviews (Zinn on power and war, philosophy, civil rights and labor activism. Excerpts with Studs Terkel,

college talks and off-the-cuff interviews); Zinn's Recommended Reading List ; Speech Transcripts; Film Excerpts; Daniel Ellsberg's *A Memory of Howard Zinn*. In these turbulent times, Howard Zinn is inspiring a new generation. This acclaimed film looks at the amazing life of the renowned historian, activist and author. Following his early days as a shipyard labor organizer and bombardier in World War II, Zinn became an academic rebel and leader of civil disobedience in a time of institutionalized racism and war. His influential writings shine light on and bring voice to factory workers, immigrant laborers, African Americans, Native Americans and the working poor.

Featuring rare archival materials and interviews with Zinn and colleagues such as Noam Chomsky, *You Can't Be Neutral* captures the essence of this extraordinary man who has been a catalyst for progressive change for more than 60 years.

Narrated by Matt Damon and featuring music by Pearl Jam, Woody Guthrie & Billy Bragg!

Henry A. Wallace: An Uncommon Man (57 minutes)

Henry A. Wallace was a brilliant farmer, scientist, writer and public servant whose views on race, poverty and peace put him far ahead of his time. Born into a family of prominent Iowa farmers, Henry Wallace founded the world's first hybrid seed company, Pioneer, that catalyzed a Green Revolution in agriculture. Wallace also served as Agriculture Secretary and Vice President under President Franklin D. Roosevelt during some of the most difficult times in American history: the Great Depression and World War II. Few people know that Wallace was the overwhelming choice of delegates to the 1944 Democratic National Convention to once again be Vice President. But party bosses, encouraged by Southern conservatives, made sure that didn't happen.

Machiavelli wrote that a wise man recognizes ills at their inception, but that this gift was given to few. Although you might not learn it from this video, Henry A. Wallace recognized the dangers of creeping fascism in the USA in the post-WW2 USA. Now that it is eating, or has already eaten the media, the executive and legislative branches, the military and our department of state, Americans should look back at our history, find out where we went wrong, and then make appropriate corrections. This video is a wonderful aid to that process. Henry Wallace typifies not just the proverbial "better angels of our nature" but the best angels of our National nature. He was so very right on so many issues that we should be as

interested in him as Albert Einstein was interested in Isaac Newton. What a dreadful sign that our nation once had public servants like Henry A. Wallace, but now hands power to men who either have no principles or men who are willing to sell them to the highest bidder. In fact, in the USA today, every jot or tittle of law or policy is seemingly for sale to the highest bidder. May the pendulum swing back the other way for a 1/4 period and then stop.

Scottsboro: An American Tragedy (90 minutes)

The notorious case of the "Scottsboro Boys"--in which the legal battles of nine African American youths charged with rape galvanized America in the 1930s--is brilliantly chronicled in this documentary, a PBS *American Experience* episode that was nominated for a Best Documentary Oscar. After two women accused the young men of raping them aboard a freight train in 1931, the men were locked up and put on trial in Scottsboro, Alabama. To no one's surprise they were convicted, but eventually the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the defendants did not receive adequate legal representation and granted them a new trial. A prominent and flamboyant New York attorney, Samuel Leibowitz, then took on their case and began to make legal history. The plight of these particular defendants in the American South became known around the world, with protesters as far away as Moscow demanding their release. This film effectively illustrates, with period photos, interviews with historians, and the recollections of people who knew some of the main characters, how the legal battles ground on for years. Eventually the men were set free, but their lives had been ruined. With understated drama this film shows how American attitudes about race and justice were changed forever by the case of the nine young men who stood accused in Scottsboro.

In March 1931, two white women stepped off a box car in Paint Rock, Alabama, with a shocking accusation of gang rape, by nine black teenagers on the train. So began the Scottsboro case, one of the 20th century's fieriest legal battles. The youths' trial generated the sharpest regional conflict since the Civil War, led to momentous Supreme Court decisions, and helped give birth to the civil rights movement.

To Kill a Mockingbird (130 minutes)

Ranked 34 on the American Film Institute's list of the 100 Greatest American Films, *To Kill a Mockingbird* is quite simply one of the finest family-oriented dramas ever made. A beautiful and deeply affecting adaptation of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Harper Lee, the film retains a timeless quality that transcends its historically dated subject matter (racism in the Depression-era South) and remains powerfully resonant in present-day America with its advocacy of tolerance, justice, integrity, and loving, responsible parenthood. It's tempting to call this an important "message" movie that should be required viewing for children and adults alike, but this riveting courtroom drama is anything but stodgy or pedantic. As Atticus Finch, the small-town Alabama lawyer and widower father of two, Gregory Peck gives one of his finest performances with his impassioned defense of a black man (Brock Peters) wrongfully accused of the rape and assault of a young white woman. While his children, Scout (Mary Badham) and Jem (Philip Alford), learn the realities of racial prejudice and irrational hatred, they also learn to overcome their fear of the unknown as personified by their mysterious, mostly unseen neighbor Boo Radley (Robert Duvall, in his brilliant, almost completely nonverbal screen debut). What emerges from this evocative, exquisitely filmed drama is a pure distillation of the themes of Harper Lee's enduring novel, a showcase for some of the finest American acting ever assembled in one film, and a rare quality of humanitarian artistry (including Horton Foote's splendid screenplay and Elmer Bernstein's outstanding score) that seems all but lost in the chaotic morass of modern cinema.

Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning classic novel has been artfully and delicately translated to the big screen. It stars the legendary Gregory Peck in his Academy Award-winning role of the courageous but understated hero Atticus Finch and features Academy Award-winning actor Robert Duvall in his screen debut plus an unforgettable performance by Mary Badham as Scout.

